

# 14 Choose Healthy Habits

## TRANSITION OBJECTIVE

Students will learn the importance of healthy habits related to diet, fluid intake and sleep.

## RELEVANCE TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

Healthy habits can affect our energy level as well as our overall health. Absences from school and work increase when we are tired and otherwise weakened by habits, such as not drinking enough water, not eating healthy, regular meals and not getting enough sleep.

## INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

### ❑ STEP 1: Update Journal

Sleeping feels . . .

### ❑ STEP 2: Convene Roundtable

"When I get a good night's sleep I feel \_\_\_\_."

### ❑ STEP 3: Advance Organizer

"Today you will learn about three important habits that can affect your health."

### ❑ STEP 4: Activity - 10 Minutes

Have an eight-ounce paper cup filled with water on every desk as students enter class. Encourage them to sip the water and think about drinking eight of these every day as a healthy habit. Tell students that researchers have found that our bodies need about eight glasses of water each day to maintain good health. All of our body organs need a constant supply of fluids. For example, our eyes, joints and mouth dry out when we do not get enough water. In addition, activities that cause us to perspire can deplete our body fluids quickly. We need to replenish our body fluids frequently throughout the day.

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LIFE MANAGEMENT: Unit 1
LESSON 14

### Timeless Living

I was very excited about my trip. I was going to spend one month underground. My name is Tim and I am a high school English teacher. I teach at a large high school in Nevada. I am 26 years old and single. On my summer vacation, I will live underground with 20 people. We will be in a timeless environment. To be part of this experiment, I had to be between 25 and 35 years old and in good health.

The experiment lasted for 30 days. I found out how living in a timeless place would affect my health. The people in charge of the experiment kept records. They recorded when I slept, ate, exercised and had fun. They watched to see how I would be affected by being away from clocks, sunlight and news.

At first, I was taken into a large building. They checked my blood pressure, weight and height. I also took a treadmill test to check my heart. I was given white clothes to wear for the month. I was not allowed to bring anything with me.

We were taken underground on an elevator. It was hard to tell how far down went. I felt a moment of panic in the elevator. I wondered what I was getting myself into. When I left the elevator, everything I saw was white. I was given a small one room apartment. I had a bed, kitchen and CD player. For the next 30 days I would not see a clock, TV, newspaper, magazine or hear a radio. I wouldn't be able to tell when it was day or night.

It was hard to keep track of the days. On my second day, I went to the social room. I was glad to see two other women and three men in the social room. Tim, one of the men, was very negative. He complained about everything. We all ignored him and had fun. We wondered what was going on in the real world. I especially liked one of the women named Julia. She was 28 and worked in an office. Julia was friendly and started a card game.

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LIFE MANAGEMENT: Unit 1
LESSON 14

### Timeless Living

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On my third day, I found a few others in the social room. I knew that the best way to get through the 30 days was to keep busy. I decided to work out. I met several people. One of the men, Louis, helped me with some exercises. He was in great shape. He told us he planned to open his own fitness center.

I found Julia and we talked about how good we were feeling. Julia said she was eating better and drinking more water. We were both exercising each time we woke up. I was feeling stronger. I told Julia I felt more relaxed than I had in a long time. We talked about how quiet it was here. We laughed about reaching for the TV remote every few minutes.

The next day, I found my group again. We all seemed to be sleeping around the same time. We talked about how it was going. Two of the men, Alex and Mark, started to complain. They really missed TV. Especially football. Julia and I laughed. We teased them about missing TV.

The rest of the 30 days were the same. By the end, I felt very healthy. I had made four new friends. We decided to stay in touch. Before we left, we were told the results of our stay. We were all much healthier. I lost five pounds and had better muscle strength. My heart rate was stronger and my cholesterol level was lower.

The researchers told us that without clocks and day light, we had become more healthy. Most of us had slept for eight to nine hours every day. We were eating five to six small meals a day. Everyone had exercised every day. Like me, everyone started eating more fruits and vegetables. We all ate less meat. This healthy way of living made us feel better than ever. When we were tested, our hearts were stronger. Everyone had lower blood pressure. We felt healthier and more relaxed.

This experiment proved that getting the right amount of sleep, eating right and exercising improved our health. Without any contact with the outside world, we lived healthier lives. We learned that we can't let our busy lives keep us from living a healthy life.

This is a fictional story based on a research experiment.

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**□ STEP 5: Activity - 25 Minutes**

Discuss a research experiment in which a group of people lived underground, not knowing when it was day or night. They could eat and sleep any time they chose. The researchers found that even when people didn't know what time of the day it was, they would naturally develop certain healthy routines and habits. They drank water throughout the day, got about eight or nine hours of sleep each day and ate smaller amounts of food four or five times a day. Discuss these research findings.

Have students take turns reading the story **Timeless Living**. Discuss the story and emphasize our natural desire to sleep eight hours per day. Tell students that other research has shown that eight hours of sleep each night is necessary for good health and that teenagers and children need even more. Talk about the difficulty some teenagers have in getting up in the morning and why.

Ask students if they ever have a problem getting to sleep or sleeping all night. Introduce the concept of insomnia. Talk

about things that can affect sleep, such as the caffeine in soda pop, tea or coffee. Also, explain that our daily routine and what we do before we get into bed can affect our sleep. For example, if we exercise, watch an exciting movie or eat a heavy meal at bed time, it may take longer to fall asleep. Keeping a regular routine also may affect how quickly we go to sleep. Routine activities help build a *body clock* that regulates the body. To get a good night's sleep, we need to go to sleep at the same time each night, not eat for two hours before bedtime and avoid caffeinated drinks or foods in the late evening.

**□ STEP 6: Evaluate Outcomes**

Sleep and water are important to good health because "\_\_\_\_\_."

**□ STEP 7: Connecting Activity**

Conduct a mini-research study on your sleep patterns. Make notes about the time you go to bed and the time you wake up for one week. Make notes about the things you do the last two hours before going to bed. Record your data on a daily chart using paper or a computer.

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**KEY WORDS**


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**caffeine****routine****replenish****researchers**


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**MATERIALS AND PREPARATION**

- Student Handouts: **Timeless Living**, pages 40-41.
- Prepare one eight-ounce paper cup for each student.
- Become familiar with the story and prepare to discuss the importance of getting enough water and sleep.

**SCANS FOUNDATION SKILLS**

- Basic Academic Skills: Reading, Listening
- Thinking Skills: Reasoning, Decision Making
- Personal Qualities: Responsibility, Self Management